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REMARKS

1. Claim 28 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over WO 93/08322. The Examiner notes that in WO 93/08322 rovings may be used to make up the mat, that rovings are "an array of parallel strands", and concludes that the structure of the mat of WO 93/08322 is identical to the web structure of claim 28 of the instant application. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The term "mat" is defined in WO 93/08322 at P. 4, lines 3-4 as follows:

As used herein, the term "mat" refers to a collection of intersecting fibers to which no binder is applied. (emphasis added)

This definition of a mat is given further life by the listing of the methods by which a mat may be formed at P. 6, lines 3-17. These are: weaving of continuous fibers (lines 2-3); looping of continuous fibers (line 8); and air blowing of chopped fibers (lines 12-13). In the examples of WO 93/08322, a mat was formed by air-laying chopped fibers on a screen (Example 1) or by weaving (Example 2). Each of these methods produces an array of intersecting fibers.

However, the fibrous web of claim 28 is a "unidirectionally oriented fibrous web". The structure of a unidirectionally oriented fibrous web is defined in the specification at P.3, line 27 to P. 4, line 2 as follows:

"A fibrous web is a layer defined by a plurality of fibers. Typically, the layer is thin and defines a surface, having a depth of at least one filament. Preferably, the fibrous web is a tape or layer in which the fibers are unidirectional. By unidirectional it is meant that the fibers are parallel to each other within the web, or that the fibers extend along a given directional axis, without overlap." (emphasis added).

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the method of claim 28 differs from, and is patentably distinguished from the prior art of WO 93/08322 by the structure of the fibrous web that is formed. Accordingly, reconsideration of the foregoing rejection of claim 28 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)/103(a) is respectfully requested.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, whether expressly or inherently described, in a single prior

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art reference." *Verdegall Bros v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 2

"To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art." *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580, (CCPA 1974)

2. Claims 29-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over WO 93/08322.

Claims 29 and 30 are directly dependent on claim 28. As claim 28 is submitted to have been shown to be unanticipated under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and non-obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), reconsideration of the rejection of claims 29-30 is also earnestly requested.

"If an independent claim is nonobvious under 35 U.S.C. 103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious." *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

3. In light of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 28-30 be reconsidered and withdrawn. It is respectfully submitted that claims 28-30 are allowable and should be passed to issue. Applicants respectfully request the same. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney if there are any unresolved issues to discuss same.

Respectfully submitted,
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Patent & Trademark Office via facsimile to Examiner E. Cole, Group Art Unit 1771, at 571-273-8300 on December 12, 2005.

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